

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. In an apparatus for treating cytological or histological specimens of a type having a plurality of conventional processing stations and a transport device for delivering
5 said specimens into and out of said plurality of processing stations, the improvement comprising:
at least one heatable reagent station being provided as a processing station.
- 10 2. The improvement as defined in Claim 1, wherein said reagent station is provided as an additional processing station to said plurality of conventional processing stations.
- 15 3. The improvement as defined in Claim 1, wherein said reagent station is provided as a replacement for one of said plurality of conventional processing stations.
4. The improvement as defined in Claim 1, wherein two said reagent stations are provided.
- 20 5. The improvement as defined in Claim 4, wherein said two reagent stations are arranged next to one another.
6. The improvement as defined in Claim 1, wherein said reagent station comprises a container having dimensions similar to those of a container of a conventional processing station.
- 25 7. The improvement as defined in Claim 6, wherein said container of said reagent station includes a peripheral wall produced from a thermally insulating material.

8. The improvement as defined in Claim 7, wherein said wall of said container is produced from plastic.
9. The improvement as defined in Claim 7, wherein said wall of said container is produced from ceramic.
10. The improvement as defined in Claim 6, wherein said container of said reagent station is produced from a thermally conductive material.
11. The improvement as defined in Claim 10, wherein said thermally conductive material is metal.
12. The improvement as defined in Claim 6, wherein said container of said reagent station includes a peripheral wall, and said wall is surrounded by a thermal insulator.
13. The improvement as defined in Claim 6, wherein said container of said reagent station includes a thermally conductive base.
14. The improvement as defined in Claim 13, wherein said base is heat-storing.
15. The improvement as defined in Claim 14, wherein said base is embodied as a metal block.
16. The improvement as defined in Claim 13, wherein said base includes an electrical heating device integrated therein.

17. The improvement as defined in Claim 6, wherein said reagent station has a thermally insulating holder for receiving said container.
18. The improvement as defined in Claim 17, wherein said holder includes a recess for
5 in which said container is inserted.
19. The improvement as defined in Claim 18, wherein said holder comprises an electrical heating device.
- 10 20. The improvement as defined in Claim 19, wherein said heating device is embodied as an electrical heating plate integrated into said holder.
21. The improvement as defined in Claims 17, wherein said holder is configured for receiving two or more said containers.
- 15 22. The improvement as defined in Claim 21, wherein said holder comprises two or more heating devices operating independently of one another.
23. The improvement as defined in Claim 17, further comprising a pan in which said
20 holder is positioned.
24. The improvement as defined in Claim 23, wherein said pan comprises holding means for receiving and optionally securing said holder.
- 25 25. The apparatus as defined in Claim 23, wherein said holder comprises an electrical heating device and said pan comprises electrical connections for connection of said heating device to a power supply.

26. The apparatus as defined in Claim 23, wherein said pan has an outflow fitting connectable to an outflow line.
27. A heatable reagent station for use as a processing station for treating cytological or histological specimens, said reagent station comprising:
- 5 a container having a thermally conductive base; and
an electrical heating device operatively connected to said base.
28. The heatable reagent station as defined in Claim 27, further comprising a holder
- 10 having a recess for receiving said container, said electrical heating device being provided as part of said holder to contact said base when said container is inserted in said recess.
29. The heatable reagent station as defined in Claim 28, wherein said electrical heating
- 15 device is a heating plate, and said base includes a planar surface in contact with said heating plate.